



Yellowstone Master Gardeners
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We want hear from you
-Send your submissions
for newsletter to ymas-tergardener@gmail.com

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Yellowstone County Master Gardeners Newsletter



Volume 2 Issue 6

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Mary McLane—Featured Master Gardener

Mary McLane was raised near Cincinnati, OH, and observed her grandparents as they farmed and gardened. She attended DePauw and Illinois State Universities and got her Masters from MSU in Bozeman. She taught band in Illinois and in Billings for 26 years until 1995 and played oboe in the Billings Symphony for 34 years until 2009.

Mary began the Master Gardener education in 2002 and became a Level III in 2011. She is interested in working with youth and has been one of the coordinators of the Master Gardener after-school program since 2004.

Being active in the Thumb-R-Green (and thumb aren't) Garden Club, Mary has been the organizing member of the Jr. Thumbs group ages 5-12 which meets in the summer. She is also highly involved in the annual flower show hosted by the T-R-G Garden Club in late July each year. Mary is an Accredited Master Flower Show Judge and has given programs to various groups on floral design and how to enter a flower show.

Being a state officer of the Montana

Federation of Garden Clubs www.mtfgc.org from 1997-2005 kept Mary involved at the state level.

In 2007, Mary and her husband Wally McLane



moved from a city lot with underground sprinkling system to 20 acres of dry land where water had to be hauled. Talk about gardening shock! She planted xeriscape plants, set up a water collection system, used square foot gardening techniques, learned that deer fencing is a necessary part of gardening and realized the benefits of having a plot at St. Andrews Community Garden in town! Since mid-August, 2013, well water is their source of water... causing visions of more successful gardening in the future.

Mary enjoys weekly women's double tennis games, tries to stay active in other ways, and travels when she can. Two horses and a dog add to their daily lives. —submitted by Elaine Allard

The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies.— Gertrude Jekyll

Review of 2013 Yellowstone County Master Gardener Program Who We Are and our Accomplishments

To begin with, 70 people attended the Spring Master Gardeners Level 1 classes, 40 people continued through the Level 2 classes and 5 people attended Level 3 in Bozeman in August 2013. We are very happy to welcome them and have their participation in all of the volunteer opportunities available.

The Master Gardeners volunteered at the Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market from Mid-July through the first Saturday of October. On average 40 people stopped by each Saturday morning to talk to us or ask gardening questions. Our booth at the Healthy By Design Gardeners' Market at Riverstone Health was also very busy and well received in the community. The volunteers created children's programs that worked well for the venue.



A Master Gardening Program was started at the Montana Women's Prison. Fifteen of the women went through Level 2.

They have a wonderful new greenhouse on-site. The women were able to contribute fresh produce to the prison from their efforts. The first classes were such a success that another class started this fall. Now, we have been asked start classes in Miles City at the Boys Detention Center and these classes are doing well too.

At ZooMontana we are always working to make the Sensory Gardens more beautiful. This is such a great help to the Zoo and helps their bottom line considerably. Also, in May we help with the Geranium Fest which is a fundraiser for the zoo and its operations.

The Moss Mansion gardens and yard is another project of the Master Gardeners. There are beautiful flower gardens around the house plus a huge yard to look after. This year, there is another project on-site, the pavers are being lifted and reset so they are level.



The C.A.R.E. After School Program provides an opportunity for Master Gardeners to work with students grades 1-6. Currently, the schools we are volunteering at are: Meadowlark, Boulder, McKinley, and Big Sky. The Master Gardeners conduct two different sessions. The first gives the students the opportunity to learn about the life cycle of bulbs and plant bulbs. The second is on seeds and cuttings, creating a terrarium and planting a cup "head" with grass.

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We are involved in many other programs from the Yellowstone County Fair to numerous community gardens around the area. We also have the opportunity to enjoy potluck picnics and tours of area gardens and facilities. This year we obtained permission to plant on a bigger piece of land at the MetraPark Fairgrounds and we'll be working on planning for what to do with this area the Spring 2014.

I would like to personally thank Amy Grandpre. She is the contact person who the public reaches out to when they need our help. She keeps us informed of the opportunities and gardening needs so we are better able to use our knowledge and volunteers for the good of the community.

Well, this is a brief recap of our group, I know I didn't talk about all of the Master Gardening programs, but I wanted to say how very proud I am of all the Master Gardeners and the projects we are involved in! Thank you everyone for all you do!! - *submitted by Bob Wicks*

Growing Green Ways to reduce the use of re- sources and chemical inputs

-submitted by Ann Guthals

- Save seeds, especially heirlooms (help increase diversity of species)
- Grow your own starts (tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, flowers, etc.)
- Share plants with other gardeners
- Grow perennials, including self-seeders like orach, various herbs like mint, sage, and oregano, and bet-you- can-never-dig-them-all-out plants like Jerusalem Artichokes.
- Make your own compost and garden fertilizer
- Grow extra produce to can and freeze
- Share extra produce with others
- Use green manures for fertilizer
- Rotate your crops each year to reduce disease and pests
- Grow "sacrifice" crops (flea beetles like the radishes I don't, for example) to keep pests away from desired crops
- Test soil and amend appropriately to keep plants healthy
- Build great soil for healthy plants that won't need synthetic fertilizers or pesticides

YCMGA UPDATE

-submitted by Merita Murdock

The YCMGA will be asking Master Gardener project leaders for their input on next years budget. Project leaders will be asked to provide information on project goals, projected expenses and estimations on volunteer hours needed. This information will help the YCMGA board with grant-seeking decisions and help determine how funds received from grants or other sources will be distributed to our Master Gardener projects.

Yellowstone County Master Gardener Association is now on Facebook. Like us and find out what is going on and contribute to our community

<https://www.facebook.com/YCMGA>



Fall Gardening Tips by Murry Lyda

Let your leaves fall onto the garden area and settle themselves or till them into the soil about 2 to 3 inches. Fall is best for tilling as the length of time until spring is long enough to establish the soil flora. Then, do not disturb with spring tillage. Also, besides leaves, it is good to add no- herbicide lawn clippings this time of year. Replace to the soil the amount in weight that was removed with organic material.

Making Pumpkins and Winter Squash Last

Master Gardener Sheri Kisch had a very successful year for her squash and pumpkins. In fact one of her Hubbard squash weighed in at 31 pounds! (See photo)

With the extra long growing season that we experienced, you too may have harvested a surplus of winter squash and pumpkins and want to save them for fall and winter eating. To do this, select only the best specimens. Any with broken stems, bruises, or slightly rotten spots will spread to other stored vegetables, so eat the less-than-perfect ones promptly. Only store fully ripened pumpkins and squash that have tough thick outer rinds that cannot be pierced with your fingernail. For longer storage, winter squashes and pumpkins must be "cured" — a process that allows their shells to dry and toughen completely. Cure the winter squashes and pumpkins in a warm, well-ventilated spot for a several weeks. You can group the vegetables in a warm spot of the house or on a sunny back porch where they can be sufficiently rested to toughen their skin. Temperatures around 70-85 degrees are ideal. After curing, pile the squash and



pumpkins in a cool place (45° F to 55° F) with low humidity. If you don't have a root cellar, any cool, dry, dark spot is fine — try a basement room, closet floor, or even a large, cool cupboard. Wherever you store them, check the vegetables regularly and remove any that are getting soft or look as if they're starting to rot. If a squash starts to soften, remove the seeds and the soft spots, cut the squash into chunks, steam them, remove the skins and freeze them.

Submitted by Elaine Allard

2 Tbsp. butter

½ green pepper, seeded and chopped

1 large tomato, chopped

2 green onions, including tops, finely chopped

1 Tbsp. parsley, finely chopped

¼ tsp. thyme

1 bay leaf

2 cups cooked pumpkin puree

3 cups chicken stock

1 Tbsp. whole wheat pastry flour

½ cup milk

½ tsp. nutmeg

½ tsp. sugar (optional)

½ tsp. salt, more or less, to taste

Melt butter and simmer green pepper, tomato, onions, parsley, thyme, and bay leaf for 5 minutes. Stir in pumpkin puree and chicken stock; continue simmering for 30 minutes. Strain mixture through a sieve, and return liquid to pan.

Blend flour and milk together; stir into soup. Season with nutmeg, sugar if used, and salt. Simmer soup another 5 minutes, then serve.

Pumpkin Soup

From Cooking in the Orchard

By Megan Mallory

Submitted by Ann Guthals

Roasted Vegetables

-Ann Guthals

- Cut up root vegetables and squash (e.g. beets, carrots, yams, onions, potatoes, butternut squash, etc.) into bite-sized chunks. Marinate in olive oil, some light balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper (and Italian spices if desired). I use Italian salad dressing or Olive Oil and Red Wine Vinegar dressing if pressed for time for the marinade. Spread some butter or coconut oil in the bottom of a roasting pan. Put in the veggies and roast at 375 degrees F. for about 40 minutes. Stir half way through and add softer veggies like zucchini or peppers and perhaps a cut-up apple, if desired. Test for doneness with a fork—cook longer if needed to desired tenderness.
- (I haven't put in quantities as this is not an exact recipe. I just cut up as much as I want to cook and adjust the quantity of seasonings accordingly.)

HAMBURGER SOUP —submitted by Ann Guthals

1½ to 2 lbs. ground meat
 2 Tbsp. oil
 ½ tsp. salt
 ¼ tsp. pepper
 ¼ tsp. oregano
 ¼ tsp. basil
 1/8 tsp. seasoned salt (or paprika)
 1 pkg. onion soup mix or 1 chopped onion
 6 cups boiling water
 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
 1 cup celery, sliced
 ¼ cup celery leaves, in pieces
 1 cup carrots, sliced
 1/3 cup dried split peas
 1 cup macaroni
 (Parmesan cheese)

In a large saucepan or kettle with a tight-fitting lid, brown meat (and onions, if using in place of soup mix) in oil. Add salt, pepper, oregano, basil, seasoned salt (or paprika), and onion soup mix. Stir in boiling water, tomato sauce, and soy sauce. Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile prepare celery, celery leaves, and carrots; then add to simmering mixture with split peas and continue to cook for 30 minutes. Add macaroni and simmer for 30 minutes longer, adding more water if necessary.

Sprinkle servings with Parmesan cheese.

Old Dutch Caramel Corn

submitted by Sheri Kisch

8 oz. Bag puffed corn curls
 (Old Dutch if you can find it)
 1/2 lb. butter (not margarine)

1 cup brown sugar
 1/2 cup corn syrup or honey
 1 tsp baking soda

Cook butter, brown sugar, and corn syrup for 2 minutes. Then add baking soda (which will cause the mix to foam). Pour the caramel mixture over the corn and stir. Place parchment paper on a large cookie sheet and pour out corn curls and spread. Place in a 250 degree oven for 20-40 minutes. Stir carefully every 10-15 minutes.

Send your favorite seasonal recipes using garden produce for submission to the newsletter to ymastergardener@gmail.com by the 15th of the month

Want to slow down green tomato ripening? Place tomatoes in a brown paper sack containing paper towels moistened in rubbing alcohol for a few hours. This can delay ripening as much as seven days, with no loss of quality.

Want to speed up green tomato ripening? Place tomatoes in brown paper sack with a few apples. Check daily as they will ripen fast and spoil fast if not used.

For sale

One bulb planter with a long handle. **All proceeds of sale will go to the YCMGA.** Best offer will receive planter. Please call Merita at 690-3754 or email at: jeffandmert@bresnan.net.



<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/mastergard.asp>

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Montana State University
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Garden: <http://gardenguide.montana.edu/>

<http://www.facebook.com/msuextension>



EXTENSION

Climate is what we expect. Weather is what we get.

A Gardener's Version of the Night Before Christmas

adapted from The Gardener, November-December, 1983

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard
the branches were bare and the ground frozen hard;
The roses were dormant and mulched all around
to protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground.
The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds
while visions of 5-10-5 danced in their heads.
The new-planted shrubs, had been soaked by the hose
to settle their roots for the long winter's doze;
And out on the lawn, the new fallen snow
protected the roots of the grasses below.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear
but a truck full of gifts of gardening gear.
Saint Nick was the driver - the jolly old elf
and he winked as he said, "I'm a gardener myself.
I've brought wilt-proof, rootone, and gibberellin, too.
Please try them and see what they do.
To start new plants, a propagating kit.
Sparkling new shears, for the old apple tree.
To seed your new lawn, I've a patented sower;
in case it should grow, here's a new power mower.
For seed-planting days, I've a trowel and a dibble,
and a roll of wire mesh if the rabbits should nibble.
For the feminine gardener, some gadgets she loves;
plant stakes, a sprinkler, and waterproof gloves;
A chemical agent for the compost pit,
and for pH detecting, a soil testing kit.
With these colorful flagstones, lay a new garden path,
for the kids to enjoy, and bird feeder and bath.
And last but not least, some well-rotted manure.
A green Christmas year round, these gifts will ensure."
Then jolly Saint Nick, having emptied his load,
started his truck and took to the road.
And I heard him exclaim through the motor's loud hum
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a green thumb!"

Keep an eye out for the email or postcard giving the time, date, & details of our yearly Holiday party.